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ABSTRACT

This report, which draws its data from a questionnaire answered by 62 members of Unesco, identifies educational practices that differentiate males and females. It is presented in four parts. Part I discusses the access of education of girls in the elementary and secondary levels. The survey reveals that wide gaps exist between the enrollment of girls and boys from the ages of 6 to 11 years in seven of the regions: Eastern, Middle, Northern, and Western Africa, West and South Asia, and Melanesia. These figures suggest that inequality takes root at an early age and condemns a large proportion of the female population to illiteracy. Part II compares the school career of girls and boys. In all regions pupil flows have increased, yet the number of girls reaching the final grade is always lower except in Latin America. Part III considers "wastage" (not reaching the full potential) among girls in both low enrollment and high enrollment countries. Some low enrollment countries believe that education for girls is a family task and that boys need schooling for their future roles as head of the household. Other factors are lack of room in schools, rural schools too far from home, and inadequate educational guidance. In high enrollment countries sex stereotyping persists. Measures to reduce wastage are discussed in Part IV: free schooling, scholarships, legislation, and revision of curricula. (KC)

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THE SCHOOL EDUCATION OF GIRLS**

Report prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

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PREFACE

In 1967, as a contribution to efforts to improve the status of women, Unesco embarked on a long-term programme to promote equality of educational opportunity between the sexes. This programme is being implemented in a series of planned stages with a view to gaining more insight into the various impediments in the way of schooling for girls and their access to certain types of education and training. The information obtained has been used to devise and test suitable programmes for the prevention or reduction of various forms of discrimination encountered by girls and women in the field of education. Among other themes, these stages were to include studies on co-education, on the access of girls to primary, secondary, technical and higher education, on the access of women to literacy courses and the teaching profession, on the relationship between educational and employment opportunities for women, on equal access for girls and women to education in the context of rural development and on the role of working mothers in the education of their pre-school age children, together with experimental projects aimed at promoting equality of educational opportunity for women and girls and the organization of a number of meetings of experts and seminars. The results of all these activities have been widely circulated.

The idea of equal educational opportunity for all has come a long way. No country now challenges its basic premise and national officials are endeavouring to give it substance by mobilizing available resources. As a result the enrolment ratios for girls in primary education has risen considerably in almost all countries, though in many cases it is still lower than that for boys. The first essential step is to enrol an increasing number of girls in schools, so as to arrive at equal numbers for the two sexes; but numerical balance is just one of the aspects of equal educational opportunity. It is also essential to take other measures and ensure, for example, that girls study for the same length of time as boys and reach the same levels of instruction. In 1977-1978 Unesco set in motion a major programme, in its desire to learn more about the causes of wastage in the education of girls, to identify measures and programmes designed to solve this problem and to work out proposals for supporting action in this field. This programme has three aspects : an international study based on a questionnaire sent to all Member States, a series of country studies estrusted to national teams in Australia, Benin, Burma, Mexico and the Syrian Arab Republic, and a programme to foster the exchange of information and experimental data whose budget included provision for study missions. In this connexion, it should be mentioned that the World Conference of International Women's Year (Mexico, 1975) drew attention to the fact that educational wastage among girls was a major barrier to the advancement of women. This is also one of the problems concerning which the countries taking part in the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year have been asked to take suitable measures in the course of the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985).

The present study, a Unesco contribution to this Decade, was carried out by Miss Isabelle Deblé of the Institut d'Etude du Développement Economique et Social at the University of Paris I, by means of her own research activities, information kindly supplied by 62 Member States (1) in response to a Unesco questionnaire and data at the disposal of the Unesco Office of Statistics.

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(1) Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suda, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia.

The author of this study, to whom the Secretariat would like to express its gratitude, is responsible for the selection and presentation of the facts analysed and for the opinions expressed, which are not necessarily those of Unesco and do not in any way commit the Organization. The designations employed by the author and her presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Unesco concerning the legal status of any country or territory, town or zone or its authorities, or concerning the delimitations of the frontiers of any country or territory. However, an effort has been made to employ as far as possible the official designations of countries in force at the time this study was completed.

INTRODUCTION

The term "wastage" (1) covers phenomena of particular interest to educators, sociologists and economists. Many teachers are troubled by the fact that a large number of pupils do not progress at the normal rate set by the educational authorities. When no more than a minority of children manage to satisfy the system's standard requirements, the school itself is called into question especially when its declared objective is to provide an identical course of instruction for all pupils. The sociologist seeks to clarify the links between the school as an institution and society, in the hope that they will account for some of the unsatisfactory conditions of schooling experienced by many groups of children. Economic analysis, on the other hand, asks whether the system of education is quantitatively and qualitatively as productive as it should be, given its resources.

In 1970, the International Conference of Education, convened in Geneva by Unesco and devoted to "the improved effectiveness of educational systems particularly through reduction of wastage at all levels of instruction", made it possible to take stock of ongoing research in this field in various parts of the world and especially of two surveys, one conducted by the Unesco Office of Statistics and the other by the International Bureau of Education (IBE). In the next two years two important works were published on the same subject (2, 3).

However, the conditions under which girls obtain primary or secondary education are still somewhat obscure and the World Conference of International Women's Year (Mexico 1975) felt that studies should be undertaken to improve our understanding of female wastage. This is the objective of our study, which concentrates on three particular questions : are the same number of girls and boys admitted to school? Does their schooling follow the same pattern? Are these two aspects related?

It is not our intention to examine schooling in general but only the factors which differentiate girls and boys in a given context. For the forms and general causes of wastage we shall refer to the two works mentioned above but concentrate on aspects of the problem that specifically concern girls.

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(1) Wastage is "a combination of two factors - the premature dropping out of pupils before completing a course (say of four years or six years of primary school), and the repetition of grades". Unesco, Manual of Educational Statistics, Paris, 1961, pp. 83-84.

(2) Unesco, Wastage in Education; a World Problem. A study prepared for the International Bureau of Education by M.A. Brimer and L. Pauli. Unesco : IBE Paris-Geneva, 1971 (Studies and surveys in comparative education).

(3) Unesco, A Statistical Study of Wastage at School. A study prepared for the International Bureau of Education by the Unesco Office of Statistics. Unesco : IBE, Paris-Geneva, 1972 (Studies and surveys in comparative education).

PART ONE

ACCESS OF GIRLS TO THE FIRST AND SECOND LEVELS OF EDUCATION

A world approach to the problem of girls' schooling raises a great many difficulties. Every State obviously has a decisive say in the organization of its education system, the definition of goals and the various administrative and pedagogical procedures employed. But it is equally self-evident that every system of education is peculiar to a particular society, which in turn embraces a range of more or less heterogeneous classes and socio-cultural groups. In contributing to the development of curricula and teaching methods, modern theories of education and psychology start out from a certain view of childhood that does not usually distinguish between boys and girls and, for nearly a century now, opinion has been urging the school to take in and educate all children in the same way, disregarding sexual differences. But, however we choose to interpret the evolution of human societies, we are obliged to acknowledge the strong sociological differentiation between men and women and between adults and children. Childhood, like adolescence, is increasingly recognized as a distinct period of life, although its length varies with the society. Lastly, the childhood and adolescence of girls and boys are still intimately linked to the male and female attitudes of each cultural group.

One of the most significant twentieth-century developments has been the gradual institutionalization of education for children and adolescents, changing attitudes towards schooling on the part of the various social groups and the way in which these groups have responded to what is presented as one of the essential factors of economic and social development. All Unesco Member States have made great efforts to collect an ever-increasing mass of data that satisfy the criteria adopted in common by Members of the Organization. The Office of Statistics of the Secretariat and the International Institute for Educational Planning are also supporting the attempts of many research centres and ministerial departments to devise indicators that express certain aspects of the evolution of schooling and its manner of operation. But, owing to the variety of structures and content, it is still difficult to compare education systems; and it is even more difficult to obtain comparable data, since methods of collecting information and drawing up statistics vary over a period of time and from one country to another. Hence the importance of efforts to standardize and the need for cautious handling of the indicators employed to establish a hierarchy of the situations in different States. We shall, however, be obliged to make use of all available indicators, while recognizing that the requirements of number may run counter to the quality of content and that these indicators reflect only part of a given reality. There have been too few in-depth studies on the education of girls as a social phenomenon showing the changing role of women to enable us to avoid recourse to a multiplicity of indicators which, though sometimes at odds with one another, may point to issues for further investigation.

Lastly, it should be noted that since the questionnaire did not elicit data suitable for quantitative treatment, the following analyses are based on information published or supplied by the Unesco Office of Statistics.

Comparison of enrolment ratios by age-group and by sex

The information here is relatively recent (1975). It covers most of the world and indicates the extent of education provided and differences between male and female enrolment at various stages of schooling.

Table 1 shows that there exist wide gaps between the enrolment of girls and boys from 6 to 11 years of age, in each case to the detriment of girls, in 7 of the regions (Eastern Africa, Middle Africa, Northern Africa, Western Africa, Middle South Asia, Western South Asia and Melanesia). In this final quarter of the twentieth century inequality takes

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root at a very early age and condemns a large proportion of the female population to illiteracy. In these regions it is particularly noteworthy between the ages of 12 and 17 years, where the ratios often vary from single to double. In half the regions of the world half the population thus suffers from one of the most potentially damaging types of discrimination for future generations. It is hardly surprising that enrolment ratios differ even more markedly for the 18-23 year age-group; indeed, the proportion of female students in this age-group exceeds 20% in only 6 regions (Temperate South America, Tropical South America, Northern America, Southern Europe, Western Europe and the USSR).

It should also be noted that this table, which is based on averages, tends to play down the actual situation which, when examined country by country, reveals even greater differences in enrolment by sex.

TABLE 1 : Enrolment ratios by age-group and by sex in the 23 regions of the world, 1975 (1)

Regions	6-11 years		12-17 years		18-23 years		6-23 years	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
EASTERN AFRICA	52.5	41.0	33.0	19.8	4.7	1.5	33.1	23.3
MIDDLE AFRICA	77.9	54.5	51.6	26.5	6.9	2.1	49.5	30.7
NORTHERN AFRICA	69.5	45.4	42.3	23.0	16.3	7.2	46.3	27.8
SOUTHERN AFRICA	82.4	85.6	73.6	70.4	10.1	4.4	59.6	58.0
WESTERN AFRICA	43.8	29.9	28.9	15.9	5.5	1.8	28.6	17.7
CARIBBEAN	85.1	86.8	60.3	59.4	16.5	12.1	58.6	57.4
MIDDLE AMERICA	84.5	83.1	57.8	45.9	17.5	7.9	57.8	50.6
TEMPERATE SOUTH AMERICA	98.0	98.1	69.7	73.3	27.4	23.6	66.6	66.7
TROPICAL SOUTH AMERICA	70.2	71.6	56.4	54.1	23.6	21.1	52.8	51.8
NORTHERN AMERICA	99.3	99.3	94.8	95.2	51.1	45.0	81.4	79.4
JAPAN	100.0	100.0	94.6	94.7	29.8	14.9	74.4	69.0
OTHER EAST ASIA	97.9	97.8	70.7	58.1	18.0	9.8	65.4	58.2
EASTERN SOUTH ASIA	70.8	64.9	43.0	34.8	10.4	7.1	45.5	39.3
MIDDLE SOUTH ASIA	70.0	43.8	35.0	17.4	8.5	2.7	41.8	23.9
WESTERN SOUTH ASIA	77.9	57.4	53.9	31.8	17.9	6.9	53.5	35.2
EASTERN EUROPE	91.8	91.3	79.7	81.3	17.0	19.1	60.7	61.8
NORTHERN EUROPE	97.7	98.3	81.6	82.7	28.6	19.7	70.8	68.6
SOUTHERN EUROPE	96.7	97.2	73.4	65.6	34.5	23.3	69.5	63.3
WESTERN EUROPE	95.3	95.9	87.1	88.8	34.9	23.3	73.3	70.5
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND	99.7	99.1	79.8	79.5	24.5	16.2	68.7	66.0
MELANESIA	46.8	36.3	45.6	24.1	7.6	1.6	35.8	23.0
POLYNESIA AND MICRONESIA	93.4	96.8	91.5	85.9	12.9	10.0	70.2	68.3
USSR	82.0	82.0	77.3	82.5	22.8	25.2	60.4	63.1

Source : Unesco, Office of Statistics, Trends and Projections of Enrolment by Level of Education and by Age, Paris, 1978 (Current Studies and Research in Statistics, CSR-E-21), pp. 47-50.

(1) Ratio between the enrolment of the given age-group and the population of the same age-group.

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PART TWO

THE SCHOOL CAREER OF GIRLS AND OF BOYS

1. Pupil flows in the education system : comparison of promotion, repetition and drop-out among girls and boys.

Changes in teaching methods together with the economic analysis of education systems by planners have stimulated the interest of teachers and education officials in the problem of repeaters and drop-outs. The problem of repeaters has been throughly examined by educators and psychologists, some of whom have flatly condemned it and substituted automatic promotion. As for drop-outs, of which there are a great number, more attention is now being paid to this problem, which is no longer a consequence of "straightforward rejection by the teacher" but rather the result of a decision by the pupil or his family. In countries with compulsory schooling, drop-out, in theory, does not occur before the end of the compulsory period, when it constitutes the alternative to continuation of studies.

To simplify matters, it could be said that repetition is forced on families by the school whereas the decision to drop out is more likely to be taken by the pupil himself or by his family.

2. Evolution of wastage among girl pupils.

There are as yet few comprehensive and through studies on the progression of female enrolments. This is in fact a highly complex phenomenon whose causes extend far beyond the school itself.

Available statistical data have, however, made it possible to bring out certain past trends in the progression of female pupils by region during two periods of time five or ten years apart, by employing the "apparent cohort" or "reconstructed cohort" methods.

In all regions considered, pupil flows have increased for both boys and girls, yet although the gap between the sexes has narrowed in certain cases, the number of girls reaching the final grade is always lower (except in Latin America) than the number of boys. In Middle Africa the difference between female and male enrolments in the 5th grade of primary education has remained the same : in spite of efforts to increase overall enrolments, there has so far been no action to help girls catch up. In Northern Africa, enrolment trends have clearly stabilized to the advantage of boys. There has been little change in the comparative situation by sex in Western Africa but in Eastern Africa the number of girls at the end of the first level has distinctly improved. In Eastern South Asia there has been practically no change in the variations observed in these two periods except that the number of boys in the final grade of the cycle has increased. In Middle South Asia, on the other hand, there has been a more noticeable improvement in pupil progression in each year of the cycle, but gaps between boys and girls have remained much the same : there are still fewer girls than boys at the end of each grade.

Countries in Western South Asia form a special case : the number of pupils entering school has been increasing more slowly - a disturbing pointer for future trends - but the end-of-cycle difference in the number of girls and boys, though still favouring boys, has been considerably reduced.

In short, except for Latin America and provided that the data employed are reliable, changes in pupil numbers from one grade to the next have not really favoured girls. This comparison of two periods contains no really convincing evidence : the overall results bear witness to considerable efforts but girls have benefited very little from them.

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3. The particular forms of wastage among girls

Girls do not always drop out at the end of primary education; some of them opt - without our knowing very well the conditions governing their choice (family wishes, personal decision, constraing and so forth) - for streams involving preparation for working life. In most countries technical and vocational education is of fairly recent origin and sprang from an often stormy interaction between production and employment structures and the structures of post-primary education. Wedged between universal basic education and a prestige-laden higher education reserved for an "élite", secondary schools have doubtless been subjected to the largest number of reforms in regard to content and structure, the most recent trend being to keep on postponing the moment when the various educational streams go their separate ways, either because of the wish to raise the level of instruction considered as the strict minimum for coping with rapid changes in living conditions or because it is desired to imitate more privileged countries. Accordingly, "technical and vocational education" may, depending on the circumstances, start immediately after primary education, during lower secondary education, at the end of lower secondary education or after the post-compulsory period, or even at university level. Its characteristic feature is that, for the first time in the educational continuum, it offers frankly masculine and feminine - and hence discriminatory - courses of training. These courses are closely subordinated to the kind of jobs carried out by men and women in each society and thus reproduce the traditional pattern of the division of labour between the two sexes. It is not our purpose to examine the various aspects of this problem, whose facets are in any case changing all the time; in every country, non-discrimination on grounds of sex is generally tending to prevail, in legal texts if not in actual practice. In our view, however, it is necessary to stress that one particular form of wastage among girls derives from the fact that they are cut off from educational streams leading to jobs suitable for either sex and are confined to courses of training that make it impossible for them to return to general studies even if they want to.

A great deal of research has drawn attention to the "guidance" trap in technical education. Such guidance, which depends on existing training possibilities and is sometimes backed by legal measures to prevent teenagers of one sex or the other from gaining admission, is aggravated by the spontaneous refusal of boys to consider occupations traditionally reserved for women.

Even in general secondary education, and especially at the university level, the way boys and girls are steered towards the wide range of available options - literacy, scientific, technological etc. - represents a clear case, if not of actual wastage, at least of education that is differentiated according to sex. It is particularly significant to note how the majority of trainee primary teachers in a good many countries, especially in Latin America, are women. Several research projects in OECD Member countries are investigating the various parameters which affect the decision to leave school at the end of compulsory education. In a country like France and at this point in their education, proportionally more girls appear to participate in the higher levels of education and distinctly fewer leave school without a qualification, whether in general or in technical education (only 39.1% of girls have not reached the level of the final lower secondary class, as against 51% of boys) (1).

In countries with very high enrolment as well as in little developed countries, the repetition of courses often puts paid to the chances of effective "guidance", which frequently depend on age. This shows that there exists an important interaction between the primary level and subsequent studies.

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(1) J. ROUSSELET et al., "L'entrée des jeunes dans la vie active: la génération 1955", in: Les Jeunes et l'Emploi, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1975 (Cahiers of the Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi, No.7).

These differences in the schooling of boys and girls do not concern wastage in the strict sense, but it is difficult to remain silent about their repercussions even when pupils do not actually drop out. Backwardness cannot be regarded as determining the kind of post-primary course adopted by girls, but it is certainly one of many factors that help account for the observed pattern of behaviour. It would be a good idea to analyse the various ways in which both boys and girls pursue their studies at the second and third levels of education by looking into the range of options open to them and how much freedom of choice they are offered.

PART THREE

THE CAUSES OF FEMALE WASTAGE

Attempted classification of replies to the questionnaire

The replies to the questionnaire have made it possible to sum up the general situation in Table 2, which sets forth certain features of the education systems concerned : presence or absence of compulsory schooling at a given point in time in the study cycle, free tuition, co-education extent of educational provision at the second level, attitudes to promotion, recourse to repetition, guidance and so forth.

By comparing this information with the data on wastage - not always supplied in the form of quantitative estimates - countries may be grouped into four broad categories :

- Category A : countries having great difficulty in providing education for school-age children, with serious wastage from the first years of primary schooling and recognizing the acuteness of the problem in regard to girls;

- Category B : countries with the same difficulties in providing education for all and with unequal conditions of schooling for each sex but in which wastage occurs much closer to the end of the primary cycle and before admission to the second level.

- Category C : no drop-out to be observed, but much repetition; the problems occur at the end of the lower stage of the second level, when pupils choose their stream or leave school;

- Category D : Both repeaters and drop-outs are relatively few in number and the problem area noted in Category C tends to gravitate from the end of lower secondary education towards the close of the upper cycle and admission to university or other types of post-secondary education and training or at the end of compulsory schooling.

Generally speaking, countries without compulsory schooling appear to employ a selective examination implying evaluation of educational attainment, sometimes in conjunction with grade averages. Most countries using these types of selection are usually to be found in categories A and B.

In categories C and D, selective examinations are encountered only in certain States of the United States and in Czechoslovakia : on the whole, the usual approach is automatic transfer, an approach which naturally tends to correlate with situations devoid of acute intake problems except for a few cases and at the second level.

Two or more repetitions in each level of education constitute a phenomenon usually associated with patterns of schooling in category A and B countries. Consistent repetition seems much less common in categories C and D but, when this occurs, it takes place at both the first and second levels.

These few remarks should not make us lose sight of the variety of particular situations or the somewhat arbitrary manner in which countries have been classified.

TABLE 2: Process of education in countries replying to the Unesco Questionnaire

Country	Compulsory Schooling		Free Education	Co-Education	Intake capacity at 2nd level (1)	Diversification	Promotion to next level or repitition	Educational guidance
Argentina	*** I	..6	E	G	E	7...	C	Yes
Australia	*** I, IIa	..9	E	G	E	11...	AI→IIa→IIb	Yes
Austria	*** I, IIa	..9	E	G	E	10...	C,RI1+IIal+	Yes
Bahrain			E			9...	C,RI1+IIal	
Barbados			E	G	E	10...	C,RI1,II1	Yes
Belgium	*** I, IIa	..8	E	G	E I, II	7...	C	Yes
Benin			E	G	E IIa, IIb	IIa...	C, RI1+,IIal,IIb1	Yes
Bolivia	*** I, IIa	..6	EI	G	E	9...	C, R, 1+	Yes
Bulgaria	*** I,IIa,III	..9	E	G	E I, II	8...	R. 1+	Yes
Byelorussian Soviet Soc.Rep.	Replied that both sexes enjoy equal educational opportunity,but did not supply details							
Central African Republic			E	G	EIIa, EIIb	7...	C,RI1+,II1+	Yes
Chad			E	G	EIIa,EIIb	7...	C,RI1+,IIal,IIb1	Yes
Chile	*** I	..6	E	G		9...	RI1+,II1	Yes
Costa Rica	** I, IIa	..9	E	G	E	10...	C	
Cyprus	*** I	.. 6	E I, IIa	G	E I, II	10...	AIIa→IIb	Yes
Czechos-lovakia	*** I, IIa	..10	E	G	E	8...	A IIa→IIb, R.1	Yes
Denmark	*** I, IIa	..7	E I,IIa,IIb	G	E I,II,	10...	I A	Yes
Domini-can Repub-lic	*** I	..6	E	G	E	11...	C,R1+	Yes

Finland	*** I, IIa	..9	E I, IIa	G	EI,EIIa,EIIb	10...	A I -> IIa	Yes
France	*** I,IIa,IIb	..10	E I, IIa,IIb IIb	G	E I,II	9...	E A I -> IIa	Yes
Gabon	*** I, IIa	..10	EI, IIa, E IIb	G	E	7...	C,RI1+,III+	Yes
German Democratic Republic	*** I,IIa,IIb	..11	E	G	E	11...	E,A I -> IIa	Yes
Germany, Federal Republic of	*** I, IIa	..9	E	G	E	11...	C,RI1+,IIa1,IIb1	Yes
Ghana	** I,IIa,IIb	..10	E	G			A I -> IIa	
Greece	** I, IIa	..9	E	I,II	E	9...	AI -> IIa R+	
Guatemala	*** I,IIa	..8	E	G	E II	10...	C	
Iran	* IIa	..8	E	I, II	E	6...	C,RI1+,IIa1,IIb1	Yes
Iraq	* I	..6	E	E I	E	10...	RI1+,IIa1+,IIb1+	
Israel	*** I,IIa,IIb	..10	E I, IIa	G	E	9...	AI->IIa,R.I1+,III or 1+	Yes
Ivory Coast	* I, IIa	..8	E	G	E	7...	C	Yes
Japan	*** I,IIa	..9	E I, IIa	G	E	10...	A I->IIa	Yes
Jordan	** I,IIa	..9	E	I,IIa	E		C, RI1+ IIb1	
Kuwait	** I, IIa	..8	E		E	9...	C, RI1+, III+	
Lebanon			E	G	E	6...	C, RI1+, III+	
Malta	*** I, IIa,IIb	..10	E I,II	I	E	10...		Yes
Mauri-tania	** I	..6	E I	G	E IIa		C, RI1, IIa1, IIb1	
Mexico	*** I, IIa	..8	EII	I		10...	C	Yes
Morocco	** I, IIa	..6	E	G	E	9...	C,RI1,III+	Yes

Nepal			E I	G	E		R1+	
Netherlands	*** I, IIa	..9	E I, IIa	G	E	8...	C I->IIa	Yes
New Zealand	*** I, IIa	..9	E	G	E	9...	A I ->IIa ->IIb	Yes
Norway	*** I, IIa,IIb	..10	E I, IIa	G	E	8...	C I->IIa, AIIa ->IIb	Yes
Pakistan			E	I	E	9...	C	Yes
Peru	*** I,IIa	..9	E I, E II	G	E	10...	AI ->IIa ->IIb	Yes
Philippines	*** I	..6	E I, II	G	E	7...	C I ->IIa	Yes
Poland	Replied that both sexes enjoy equal educational opportunity, but did not supply details							
Portugal	*** I, IIa	..8	E I, IIa	G	E	10...	R 1+	Yes
Qatar			E		E		C	
Spain	** I, IIa	..8	E I, IIa, E IIb	G	E I, I1	9..	E A I->IIa	Yes
Sri Lanka	*** I, IIa	..8	E	G	E	9...	A I ->IIa R.1	Yes
Sudan			E		E	10...	C, RI1, IIa1, IIb1+	
Sweden	*** I, IIa	..9	E	G	E I, IIa	10..	A I ->IIa ->IIb R1	Yes
Syrian Arab Republic	* I	..6	E	I, IIa	E	9...	C, RI1+, III	
Tunisia			E	G	E	7...	C, RI1+, 1I1+	
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	Replied that both sexes enjoy equal educational opportunity, but did not supply details							
United Republic of Cameroon			E	G	E	7...	C, RI1, III	Yes
United Republic of Tanzania	* I	..7	E	G	E		C, RI1, IIa1	Yes

United States of America	*** I, IIa, IIb	..10	E I, II	G	E	7...	R1 or 1+	Yes
Uruguay	** I, IIa	..9	E	G	E	10...	C, R1+	
Venezuela	*** I, IIa	..8	E	G	E	8...	C	Yes
Yemen			E	G	E		C, RI+, II+	
Zambia			E	G	E	8...	C, R1+, II+	Yes

Notes:

(1) :This refers to intake capacity in relation to the number of qualified candidates; where selection is practised, therefore, not all candidates are necessarily qualified.

I :First level or primary education

II .Second level or secondary education

IIa :First stage of second level or lower secondary education

IIb :Second stage of second level or upper secondary education

III :Third level or higher education

E :entirely

E :almost entirely

G :general practice or becoming general practice

C :competitive or non-competitive examination, or council of teachers

R :repetition

A :automatic

1 :once

1+ :twice or more

..6, ..7, ..8 : Up to 6th, 7th or 8th year of study

6..., 7..., 8... : from 6th, 7th or 8th year of study

* : recently

** : for the last few years

*** : for a number of years

.../...

I - CONDITIONS AFFECTING ENROLMENT FOR ALL PUPILS

The reasons for wastage among girls given by countries answering the questionnaire fall into two broad groups : those accounted for by general conditions of a cultural, economic and social nature, and those more particularly linked to the quality of the education provided. It should be emphasized that respondents pointed out that little or no specific research had been carried out in this field. Their replies, therefore, can be regarded only as a first step towards study of the problem. Stereotyped attitudes survive although the general situation, as we have seen, is clearly in the process of changing despite the slow rate of progress common to every undertaking in the field of education. Thus, the replies reflect currently accepted ideas on the subject, sometimes based on research and sometimes on the opinions of more or less representative community leaders. But it should be borne in mind that the causes put forward rarely make a distinction between girls and boys.

1. The situation in countries with the lowest enrolment levels

a) Socio-economic and cultural factors

For countries placed in categories A and B, i.e. the majority of countries and those most seriously handicapped by an accumulation of factors that hinder equality of access and opportunity from the first level onwards, the most frequently mentioned problem was low family income. This greatly perturbs school attendance for both boys and girls and there can be no doubt that poverty, affecting the State as a whole or certain regions or certain social groups, is the major cause of the absence or inadequacy of schooling for children.

Poverty influences attiutdes to the school in several ways. In vast regions of the world child labour is essential to the survival of numerous social groups. A great deal of research by the International Labour Office on the "informal" or "non-structured" sector has highlighted the role of young people in family businesses : as unpaid helper or apprentice the girl or boy has a specific role depending on the type of activity, but, for many countries, we lack information on how many young people contribute in this way to commercial or non-commercial production. Certain studies suggest that the proportion of working 10 to 14 year-olds could, if a count were made, turn out to be high. Other replies mention the additional income brought in by young people who work.

This need for the young to work, even temporarily, sometimes comes on top of a total lack of interest in education, whose usefulness is completely missed. This attitude seems to be at odds with the strong demand for schools that has arisen in most countries of the wrold in the course of the present century, and particularly since about 1950; none the less it is common to many social classes and goes some way to explaining wastage among pupils. Some people do not hesitate to accuse the system's inefficiency and contend that many families, especially those in rural areas, who were formerly enthusiastic about education, have become sceptics and lost some of their determination to see that schools are established or maintained. In our view, however, only a very small minority at present see things in this way.

Handicaps such as poverty, illiteracy and lack of confidence in the benefits of schooling make it harder to accept the loss of income occasioned or to bear the direct or indirect cost of sending children to school. A great many States remarked on this kind of economic constraint. The pupil's clothing, even when not a uniform, the cost of shoes when there is far to walk, the cost of books, materials and in some cases transportation - all these items represent sacrifices on the part of the family which F.Champion Ward (1) has no hesitation in calling "heroism".

(1) F. Champion Ward, Introduction to Education and Development, New York, Praeger, 1974.

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The poor health and malnutrition of children, often due to the parents' lack of resources and education, are clearly partly to blame for poor results, whether this means repeating or dropping out, which obviously have a very negative effect on the pupil's performance. It is quite obvious that this issue has not been sufficiently studied but, in certain States, it now appears to be of priority concern.

Two other factors have a decisive impact on wastage. The first concerns migrations. In many countries, the zones of economic activity are very unevenly spaced with the result that there exist on the one hand seasonal migrations of agricultural worker families and, on the other, a flight from the land towards the outlying districts of towns and cities. This greatly perturbs the child's schooling and we lack information on the education of children who either change school or temporarily or permanently drop out. What we do know, however, is that they are not isolated cases but identifiable groups that statistical resources do not cover satisfactorily. A few countries refer explicitly to this problem of parents who move house. In Guatemala, for example, "very large-scale migrations in 1968, affecting 250.000 families from the Altiplano, were noted at the time of the coffee and sugar harvest".

The second factor is cultural and pedagogical in nature and connected with the quality of the educational provision, treated in the next chapter. This is the language problem. The large number of languages spoken outside the school, or differences between the vocabulary of the disadvantaged classes and that of privileged groups, even when the medium of instruction is the national language, is regarded as one of the direct causes of wastage.

Lastly, all these disadvantages are aggravated by rural isolation or a nomadic way of life. To live deep in the country or as a nomad is to combine the disadvantages of a low level of income, a rigid social organization, a less open-minded attitude towards modern culture, a greater risk of being underfed and more often ill with little medical attention, and of belonging to isolated language and cultural groups.

In nearly all cases girls suffer from the additional handicap of seeing their future linked to a view of life distinct from that of men, the dominant social group.

b) Shortcomings of the education system

A third of the countries taking part in the survey admitted to serious difficulties in providing education for all children even at the primary level alone. Statistical investigations carried out by Unesco reveal, in fact, that the majority of the countries in the world are faced with this problem. But, since Europe provided the highest proportion of countries replying to the questionnaire, the information received gives an overoptimistic picture of the intake capacity of the education systems.

School zoning

All countries in categories A and B, without exception, stated that "school zoning" - to employ a planner's expression - was unsatisfactory. In other words, the network of schools is too sparse to meet needs, and many existing schools, particularly in rural areas, do not cover the full primary cycle. This is brought out by the following quotation, which refers to Latin America (1) : "In this respect, the situation is particularly grave in the country, where the population is too widely dispersed for the necessary educational services to be provided under economically feasible conditions ... The situation is all

(1) Carlos Delgado, "Education today blocks change in Latin America' in: Education on the move, Paris, Unesco Press, 1975, pp. 29-30.

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the more serious as the Latin American countries, in general, are essentially rural, with the majority of the population dwelling outside the cities and deriving its livelihood from agriculture ... The fundamental problems of education are thus more serious in the rural areas than in the cities, where most of the country's educational forces are concentrated".

Although attention is often drawn to facts such as these, there exist no studies that cover the problem of wastage in terms of the type of school network available. Are drop-outs and repeaters more numerous in rural or in urban areas? In single-teacher schools? In schools with only one classroom? In public or in private schools? In schools providing only 3 hours of instruction each day? Or 4 hours? Or 6 hours?

Compulsory schooling

The majority of States in category A have not introduced compulsory schooling, a fact which certain educators deplore since legal obligation would stimulate the public authorities, local communities and private organizations to allocate more resources to education. A considerable number of replies noted the absence of this constraint as one of the reasons for wastage. It has to be admitted that, without compulsory schooling, school zoning is practically meaningless. In one of his recent works, Jacques Hallak (1) speaks of the vital role of school zoning in "a geographical levelling-out of the conditions of supply through the creation of equal intake capacities and an equitable distribution of human, material and financial resources over the various areas" and in "equal social opportunity for, and access to schooling through active measures encouraging children to go to school (e.g. setting up a school-transport service, canteens and boarding establishments) and opposing segregation of the sort where certain schools are attended by certain groups on a race or creed basis".

Indeed, the lack of transportation, of teachers and of canteens - in short, the lack of resources to look after the pupils and provide them with decent educational facilities - are mentioned time and time again in the replies to the questionnaire as well as in many documents gathered together by Unesco.

Unsuitable courses of instruction

The Sudan pointed out that no suitable education had been developed for a population that is largely rural and nomadic; many respondents to the Unesco survey referred to similar cases of badly adjusted school systems. They regarded the structures, methods and content of education as being out of tune with the local context, a hangover from not-so-distant colonial approaches or the importation of foreign models.

This incongruity, which has been denounced for decades, takes a wide vareity of forms, including inappropriate curricula which, often because they have been imitated, imported or decided upon by an elite completely out of touch with the ordinary people, ill prepare pupils to work their way through the educational process and give the advantage to those whose background helps them compensate for the shortcomings of the school. The school courses are also too academic and do not stress the value of practical activities associated with occupations vital to the country 's economic life.

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(1) Jacques Hallak, Planning the Location of Schools : an Instrument of Educational Policy, Unesco : International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, 1977, page 13.

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The system's poor quality is also to be seen in the complete absence of inadequacy of educational and vocational guidance services. Even when they operate, they are often a prey to the very vices they claim to cure, for their staff is insufficient and undertrained. A certain number of countries complained bitterly of this state of affairs in primary or secondary education or, in many cases, in both at once.

When education is not free and no or not enough provision is made for financial assistance to purchase clothing and textbooks and pay for transportation and boarding facilities, the system - as a number of countries pointed out - ends up in practice by eliminating children from the poorest backgrounds.

Without referring to precise studies, many countries stated that they were short of teachers for all levels of education or that their teachers were undertrained.

To sum up, there is the feeling that the general conditions governing the "supply" of education are not being properly met. Human and material resources are lacking in many regions, especially in rural and suburban areas. In some cases the language chosen as the medium of instruction is not the one spoken at home and the school's rules are enforced with little insight. A few replies appeared to deplore both the effect of automatic promotion without the backing of measures to enable pupils to advance at their own pace and repetition that overburdens classrooms. Poor results are unlikely to stimulate the life of the school, which is all too often pervaded by apathy and discouragement.

2. Wastage in countries with high enrolment

The sample of 62 countries replying to the Secretariat's questionnaire included a high proportion (45%) of States with high enrolment; in other words, it does not, as we have said, truly reflect the world situation. Moreover, the often detailed information they provide shows up the problem of wastage in a special light that is not easy to discern from normally available data.

In countries with high enrolment there is no problem of access, since all children are accepted in primary and secondary schools up to the end of the legally defined period of compulsory schooling. The generalization of education in conjunction with compulsory schooling would thus appear to have considerably reduced what is usually understood by wastage. However, there is a lack of more detailed studies aimed at drawing attention to the more subtle forms of "unsatisfactory" schooling that statistical macroanalysis is unable to bring to light.

These forms of wastage are backwardness owing to repetition (measured by the number of young people who leave school before reaching the normal level of education for their age), the steering of pupils towards special streams for those having difficulty in keeping up with the established curriculum, and the more or less equitable selection procedures for those going on to higher levels of education. But the replies did not refer to these problems except to say that they could not be differentiated according to sex.

The information received dealt essentially with drop-outs. After compulsory schooling, systems vary as to how far they open their doors. They may offer a more or less broad range of streams, varying in prestige and length. To select the candidates who will continue their studies they employ criteria that may or may not be in tune with the living conditions and cultural, economic and social environment of the young.

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All respondents agreed that social origin is an important factor of discrimination, and it should be stressed that, even though its complexity makes this concept difficult to express scientifically, each country felt the pressure that a series of factors related to the individual's environment exerted on his or her future.

The United States drew up the profile of the type of pupil "liable" to drop out. Education specialists assume the existence of a recognizable pattern of behaviour that can be discerned about two years before the individual in question leaves school : significant absenteeism, from 20 to 30 days a year and even more; this poor record of attendance is associated with an evident lack of interest in the school and of motivation for any organized activities. He or she is normally two or three years behind, incapable of choosing personal objectives and envisaging a future occupation, and sometimes displays hostility towards the adult world, the authorities, the community and his or her own family. In most cases, this type of pupil comes from low-income social classes and also has financial reasons for leaving school. But social origin can be correlated with dropping out : the most likely to end up with a deficient education are young negroes and young persons from Spanish-speaking families. The reply, for instance, took the example of five States (Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas) in which the American Citizens' Rights Commission had found that only 6 out of 10 first-year pupils of Mexican origin would graduate from "high school" and that only about 60% of these could read satisfactorily.

In all States the parents' educational level was regarded as being closely related to the performance of their children at school.

It is not only their family's poor social status that handicaps young people : the "regional" variable comes in for just as much criticism as "occupational category" and all the usual parameters mentioned by sociologists, economists and planners - income level, cultural background, locality, size of family, and so forth (1). The Belgian reply illustrated several of these phenomena : the young are obliged to look for a job very early if they come from large families, from families in which their parents have been working from an early age and are waiting for their children to contribute, following the death of one of the parents, because of boarding costs, etc. In Sweden, poor attendance is more common in urban than in rural areas. Finland stated that a 1960 study had revealed that the admission criteria for upper secondary education varied according to pupil background and that candidates from rural areas or working class families were required to perform better than those from a more privileged milieu.

Certain countries, including New Zealand, drew attention to a fairly recent development, namely, the determination of young people to throw off school and family constraints in order to be free and independent. This links up with the observation that the young person sometimes regards failure at school as one of his most effective means of braving parental authority, reacting against an unstable parental relationship or of coming to terms with the emotional neglect of some parents - in large families for instance - who are not the least interested in their children's schooling. The desire to be independent is often connected with the need to earn money and so escape from the economic grip of the family.

Respondents often produced reasons connnected with the kind of educational services made available : the general structure of post-compulsory systems, the quality of guidance, course content, teacher training. A noteworthy development and particularly in France, is the evolution of pre-school education. All children of five years old are at school, 85% of four years olds and over 60% of those aged three and under. A link has in fact been noticed between pre-school enrolment and the number of repeaters in the first year of primary education : the latter drops considerably as pre-primary facilities spread.

(1) On this point see : R. Poignant, Education in the Industrialized Countries, The Hague, N.V. Martinus Nijhoff, 1973 and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Education, inequality and life chances/L'Education, les inégalités et les chances dans la vie, Paris, 1975, 2 volumes.

As for the zoning of schools, intake capacity at the upper secondary level has a decisive impact on the continuation of studies. Recourse to selection for post-compulsory education is a matter of political choice, even though the pressure of demand on the part of families influences the decision of the authorities. All countries alluded to the problems raised by restricting the number of places. A related point is that the results obtained in previous years affect the choice of those who are "rejected".

It was felt that a wide range of options more in line with the aspirations of youth might encourage them to pursue their education. Similarly, it was considered essential to improve guidance procedures at the end of compulsory schooling in order to prevent young persons from dropping out before completing the chosen cycle. Since, in fact, young persons are no longer compelled to attend school once they have decided to go on to further education (whatever role is played in their decision by family wishes or personal resolve), they may leave school because the course of studies does not match their expectations. It was repeatedly stressed that course content and teaching methods were liable to challenge by the young : if courses were too theoretical or did not prepare for what they felt to be "life", they became discouraged and tended to drop out, sometimes after several setbacks or repetitions.

At this level it is important for teachers to be trained to spot the student who is ill at ease in the structures available to him. Several aspects have to be taken into consideration : training in social psychology should make it easier for teachers to carry out their work in the school and in the classroom but should also stimulate them to establish contact with the environment of young people, get to know their family situation and appreciate their social and economic background.

Migration raises new problems for countries with high enrolment; for example, children arriving from abroad are handicapped by not knowing the language of instruction. The language problem is in fact partly to blame for wastage, whether in the form of repetition or drop-out, but it is difficult to separate this factor from all the others of an emotional, economic and cultural nature that jeopardize the schooling of migrant children.

II - CONDITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH MAXIMUM WASTAGE AMONG GIRLS

In analyzing the replies to the questionnaire, we shall continue with the four categories of country, even though attitudes to the problem of girls' schooling by no means always correspond to the statistically observed reality.

a) Causes of female wastage in countries with the lowest enrolment levels

A few Latin American countries began by pointing out that wastage was not higher for girls than for boys, and this point is confirmed for all States in that region by the figures presented in Parts One and Two of this study. In this case, why do boys tend to benefit less from the school than girls? Are they perhaps called upon, at a very early age, to perform jobs reserved for male children? It appears, in fact, that although more girls pursue their education, even at the second level, only a small proportion take jobs and, for them, vocational training is almost exclusively focused on the teaching profession.

All the other States agreed that wastage is higher among girls than among boys and that it sometimes reaches alarming proportions. Here again two sets of reasons are given, rarely backed up by proof and actual studies but reflecting deep-seated convictions based on an arrangement of present-day facts that sometimes owes a lot to outdated models. The first has to do with the status and role of women in the various social groups of each country and the second involves the design and organization of the school system.

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Status and role of women

Every society is composed of social strata whose members have, throughout history, been attributed an individual status, this arrangement being regarded as vital to a certain concept of species surival and resulting in separate roles for men and women. Many ethnologists, anthropologists and sociologists have studied the ways in which men and women perform distinct, highly-defined and hierarchical tasks in the various communities of the world. Although historical and political evolution, together with the patterns of development of each region, have undermined or modified this division of tasks, they have not brought it to an end : it is more or less implicit in terms such as "tradition", "custom", "the woman's function". Religion is merely one of the cultural factors that may render the outer limits of the woman's "role" in a particular group more, or less, flexible.

A great many countries make no distinction between the various possible attitudes to enrolling a girl in school and to her educational career, despite the fact, as we have seen, that these attitudes stem from different approaches. Many people still hesitate to trust the school where girls are concerned and, were we to include the reservations of minority population groups, there would be even more. Certain countries with a low level of school enrolment feel that in many respects schooling is by no means essential for girls, their education being a task for the family or group. In some cases it is even considered "shameful" to send one's daughter to school. On the other hand, it is sometimes stated that experience of school is needed by boys for their future responsibilities as head of the family, implying that formal education, although recognized as important for the future of the group, should be reserved for a single sex.

This general statement is followed by more detailed remarks that all relate to various aspects of the woman's role :

- "at home", the daughter has a certain number of duties that would be impossible to perform if she left the house at regular hours in order to attend school;

- housework is always mentioned as a vital necessity : considerable importance is attached to help with preparing meals and, where necessary, to fetching water and numerous other tasks;

- care of younger children, when the mother is giving birth or away from home working;

- lastly, female children also take part in raising food crops or in craftwork.

All these reasons tend to buttress the refusal to send girls to school or to justify their absenteeism. Other aspects of schooling, especially drop-out, can be more satisfactorily explained differently.

Early marriage, for instance, leading to motherhood while the girl is still of school age, provides a good reason for dropping out. Many young girls jump directly from childhood to the role of wife and the unmarried teenager is a product of schooling. As soon as she reaches puberty, that is, as soon as her potential capacity to "reproduce" makes its appearance, the young girls finds herself bound to the various demands of the group's survival system. When most members of the group respect the traditional rules, the girls themselves show little interest in attending school, since they feel much more secure conforming to tradition. On occasions, even their health, considered more delicate than that of boys, is used as an excuse to protect them from the onslaught of modernity.

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These remarks reflect the comments of a few Unesco Member States replying to the questionnaire in an attempt to account for what they regard as an unsatisfactory level of female enrolment. As a matter of fact, no more than about fifteen replies incriminated such obstacles and thus made it possible for us to produce this general picture of a situation that, allowing for national variations in extent and detail, could apply to a much larger group of countries.

Shortcomings of the school system

The system of education is not really perceived as a potential source of poorer schooling for girls.

One State explained that family reluctance was due to co-education; another pointed to the shortage of girls' schools (evidence that obstacles still exist), stating that it is possible to prolong mixed education in the same school from early childhood and that the conditions for implementing co-education in certain regions should be thoroughly examined. These States regretted both the shortage of female teachers and the fact that they were relatively less qualified than their male colleagues. This reproach concerning the lower level of girls' schools came up quite often.

But the handicaps most frequently encountered by female pupils are a direct result of inadequate geographical coverage:

- Not enough places, especially in middle and secondary schools. This raises problems of interpretation : is it the network of schools insufficient to cater for everybody or is priority given to boys when the intake capacity is limited?

- Rural schools are too far from the home and girls find it more difficult than boys to cope with this situation.

- The post-primary schools are located in the towns and do not have enough boarding facilities; this makes it difficult, if not impossible, to provide accommodation for girl pupils.

- The cost of education was also blamed, though it was not made clear whether this referred to tuition costs, the cost of clothing and school supplies or to loss of earnings; nor, once again, was it stated whether there was more hesitation over investing in the education of a girl than of a boy.

- Lastly, educational guidance is particularly inadequate where girls are concerned.

This brings us to the essential problem of adapting schools to meet the needs of female pupils. It emerges clearly in fact that the school passes on certain types of knowledge and certain values which cause concern because they might well lead adolescent girls astray and not help them to realize their potential or which prove totally irrelevant to their adjustment to their future life.

The authorities are particularly conscious of lack of communication between the education system and the most apprehensive and economically vulnerable segment of society or those most deliberately hostile to the inevitable changes brought about by education. Although wastage is always referred to in official statements on education in general, it becomes a secondary issue where girls are concerned. Everything takes place as if the important thing were access to education and as if problems related to the educational process should necessarily solve themselves.

b) Female wastage in countries with high enrolment

A number of countries pointed out that wastage among girls was less than among boys, but their use of the term "wastage" was often ambiguous. Some, for example, took test results or type of course according to sex of post-compulsory drop-outs into consideration.

The Member States with high enrolment - well represented in the group of countries taking part in the survey, as we have seen - have utilized the findings of the large-scale research programme undertaken by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) between 1966 and 1973 (1) on the results obtained in knowledge tests covering six school subjects and some 250.000 pupils - mostly from educationally advanced countries - representative of several pupil populations at critical stages in their school careers. Belgium and New Zealand in particular drew on it for certain parts of their very detailed explanation of schooling for girls.

Before summarizing this information, it should be noted that all replies contained very explicit references to a certain view of the status of women, with many countries calling attention to ongoing research on male and female stereotypes. But the stereotypes persist none the less and show through a number of replies. There are allusions, for example, to the unequal ambition of girls and boys, the former wanting to go in for so-called feminine or social studies or aiming at lower qualifications than their male fellow-students.

As for the results obtained by girls and boys in three scientific subjects - physics, chemistry and biology - the IEA survey showed that "at the start of schooling the difference between boys and girls is minimal. The gap between the results according to sex grows as they get older (international averages for the divergence between the three population groups worked out at 0.23; 0.46; 0.69). The school and out-of-school environment have thus had a diversifying influence". (2)

Several studies in the United States and Europe have sought to show how the school's course content can strengthen traditional stereotypes of male and female roles. Belgium cites the example of the special interest boys may have in the third level physics exercises, as mentioned in the official classroom instructions of the primary education curriculum in 1957.

This point is taken up in detail in the document provided by Australia (3), which refers to a series of studies analyzing educational materials in general use and what they contain. (4) On the whole, it seems that they provide children with models against which they can measure their own parents and with types of behaviour to which they may aspire as they grow older. The areas of activity for females were predominently in the home, whereas males had more to do with the wider community. The characters of each sex in children's readers, for example, present constant traits : girls were "gentle, timid, conforming, domestic, physically weak, docile, and fearful in stress or danger situations". Their aspirations were confined to "a narrow list of traditional female roles including housewife, mother, nurse, air hostess, secretary, salesgirl, teacher, model, librarian". They tended to have "low self-esteem" and to be "dependent on the approval of males".

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(1) Series of publications by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, Almqvist and Wicksell, Stockholm.

(2) G. Henry, IEA Researcher at the Laboratoire de Pédagogie Expérimentale, University of Liège, Revue de la Direction Générale des Etudes (Brussels) No.3, March 1974.

(3) Girls, school and society; a report by a study group to the Schools Commission, Canberra, November 1975.

(4) Ibid., p. 73.

The masculine models, on the other hand, were invariably "head of the family, the bread winner and firm decision maker ... unafraid, competent, active, strong, rational and adventurous. Their occupations were ... physically demanding or else technical jobs, such as builder, plumber, carpenter and mechanic".

Generally speaking, all the studies referred to found that in young children's readers and story books male characters appeared from two to four times as frequently as female figures.

Australia also stressed, along with other respondents, the role played by the teaching profession in differential schooling according to sex. The "Pygmalion effect" (1) is probably the most well-known demonstration of how the opinion of their teachers influences the performance of pupils.

An American study (2) set out to describe what primary teachers expect from a good pupil. The answers suggest that a boy should be active, adventurous, aggressive, energetic, independent and a girl sensitive, calm, poised and co-operative.

Another study (3) on "models" for the socialization of adolescents reveals that girls form a more negative than positive image of themselves. They see their future in a more limited way than boys and their school results show that they interiorize their sense of sexual inferiority. Even though their verbal intelligence is superior, they see themselves as less academically competent than boys.

The IEA survey regarded co-education as one of the factors likely to reduce sexual differentiation in schools. Its findings revealed that, for the 10 to 11 year age-group in all countries covered, the differences in performance between girls and boys were much smaller in co-educational schools, whatever the proportion of such schools in a particular country.

In 1970/71, for example, the country in which co-education had made the least progress was Belgium. There, among children of 10 to 11, a divergence of around 0.27 was noted in single sex schools as against 0.22 in co-educational ones; by the age of 14 to 15 years the gaps were 0.76 and 0.18 respectively, and the same phenomenon could be detected at the end of secondary education. Thus, within the social context of the countries surveyed, sexual segregation emerged as one of the causes of differences in scholastic performance between boys and girls.

We have seen how the children of ethnic minorities in countries with high enrolment performed less well at school than the other pupils. The example of Australia (Table 3) shows, in addition, that there exists a marked differentiation by sex : the percentage of girls is always lower than that of boys.

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(1) R. Rosenthal and L. Jacobsen, Pygmalion in the classroom, New York, N.Y., Holt, 1968.

(2) M. and D. Sadker, "Sexism in Schools : an issue for the 70's", The Educational Digest, 1974.

(3) D.E. Edgar, "Adolescent Competence and Sexual Disadvantage", La Trobe Sociology Papers, June 1974.

TABLE 3 : School status of 16 and 18 year-olds by birthplace and sex : Australia (1),1971

SCHOOL STATUS	COUNTRY OF BIRTH							
	AUSTRALIA		GREECE		ITALY		YUGOSLAVIA	
	B%	G%	B%	G%	B%	G%	B%	G%
At 16 years old								
At school	53	49	40	32	39	34	37	34
Full-time post-school education	21	16	24	15	31	13	17	8
Not in education	26	35	37	54	31	54	48	59
At 18 years old								
At school	7	4	16	8	8	7	6	3
Full-time post-school education	38	25	23	16	36	18	28	6
Not in education	55	71	63	77	57	77	66	91

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

PART FOUR

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FEMALE WASTAGE IN EDUCATION

I - LIST OF MEASURES ADOPTED OR LIKELY TO BE ADOPTED WITH A VIEW TO REDUCING EDUCATIONAL WASTAGE IN GENERAL

a) In countries faced with the greatest difficulties in expanding enrolments

- Examination of replies to the questionnaire reveals that many of the States with the greatest difficulty - quantitative and qualitative - in providing education have no set of regulations on compulsory schooling. Whatever the particular shortage which makes them hesitate to adopt a measure they know to be inapplicable in practice throughout the country, it appears that, for pupils already admitted, compulsory schooling naturally reduces drop-out. This widely-recognized fact is particularly emphasized by a few countries that want to prolong compulsory schooling in order to reduce drop-out before the level of attainment is high enough to generate favourable individual or collective attitudes to development.

- These same countries stress that free education over a certain period of time is an effective solution, with the State covering the direct costs of sending a child to school, materials, the cost of clothing, food (canteens) or health care and a certain sum, in the form of financial assistance, scholarships, loans, etc., to compensate for the family's loss of earnings. This appears to be one of the actions most clearly directed at the struggle against poverty and misery, so often mentioned among the causes of refusal to attend school, poor performance and drop-out.

- Another series of measures is designed to increase the system's intake capacity. Here two tendencies may be discerned:

  - to increase the number of schools;
  - to rationalize the "zoning of schools".

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(1) Excluding Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory.

We have seen how each of these courses of action can in certain cases help to reduce wastage; the former calls for the establishment of full-cycle schools to enable pupils to terminate the course of education begun and the latter for a systematic attempt to complete existing facilities and to select locations for schools that will provide the best conditions for a equal "supply" of education and integrate all the relevant human, geographical, material and financial parameters.

Improvements in the education system's retention rate are also being sought through changes in the teaching structures. For example, a country may redefine the length of each cycle of education, substituting a 6 years-3 years - 3 years pattern for the previous system of three 4-year periods, in the hope that this measure will enable it to retain pupils until at least the fourth year of primary education in order to avoid them relapsing into illiteracy.

These changes sometimes involve setting up "support structures" aimed at consolidating the pupil's level of attainment :

- The establishment of pre-school education seeks to ease the transition from family life to the school but also to facilitate learning at the primary level. It is being considered in a few countries, and sometimes for rural areas too.

- Specially adapted measures for disadvantaged regions are also being tried out to provide pupils with better schooling. In some cases this means giving a rural slant to the network of schools and their curricula, in others increasing the number of schools in the neglected frontier zones, or extending facilities by adding secondary schools or developing specific compensatory measures for disadvantaged populations and social groups. Various countries have adopted different measures to fight against repetition and drop-out, from adjusting the school timetable to local needs, to establishing travelling schools for nomadic populations or "special" schools with flexible structures that can accommodate children of different levels having difficulty with their education.

- Changes in educational practices regarding repetition, promotion and the system of selection for access to another level of instruction. Guidance is often mentioned but with few details. Some suggestions arising from other research will be put forward late

At the primary level, the most common approach is to try out automatic promotion as a means of getting teaching methods to adjust to the varying needs of individual children rather than to expect pupils to fit into possibly over-rigid standard requirements.

As for access to the second level of education, this is sometimes based on a single anonymous test or made automatic

Many countries in Latin America and Asia are concentrating their efforts on improving the number and quality of their guidance services. This enterprise is obviously linked with changes in the conditions governing promotion from one level to the next and in the assessment criteria mentioned above. Very sophisticated techniques may be used for the early detection of children liable to drop out or encounter serious difficulties at school.

- As a corollary to all these measures, one of the most widely-used means of combatting wastage is the training and qualification of teachers, administrative staff and guidance officers backed up with attempts to sharpen their awareness of the problem. Primary teachers in the classroom do not always appreciate the extent of wastage, its repercussions on the struggle against the growth of illiteracy or what it costs the nation. Today, a number of countries are combining this new awareness of the problem with improved approaches to teaching and guidance within the framework of a reorganized ministry of education and inspectorate.

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To help teachers accomplish this task, but also to avoid tendencies to an exaggerated mobility that would be detrimental to pupil performance, steps are being taken to ease working conditions in disadvantaged regions far from urban centres and the principal lines of communication. There are, for example, programmes under way to provide accommodation in hostels or residences and/or financial assistance. Generally speaking, higher salaries for teachers will undoubtedly restore the frequently tarnished prestige of their profession.

- Lastly, one of the actions aimed at furthering equality in the conditions of schooling is the adaptation of curricula to national socio-economic realities. Many countries, claiming that pupils become apathetic because the world of education is totally divorced from outside life, have made efforts to bring their system more in line with their needs. There are many references to the desire not to cut education off from labour market outlets. This explains new options in the field of vocational training, experimental courses in farming techniques from the sixth year of study onwards, full-scale revision of curricula and the production of new school textbooks for the first ten years of education.

- The education systems, realizing that all social classes must understand how to obtain good results in education, are employing all the forms of education they can organize. A certain number of countries are endeavouring for example, to arouse parental interest in the daily life of the school and the performance of their children, to demand their participation, to develop adult education activities, literacy courses, "consciousness-raising" - in short, to bring the people as close to education and training as possible.

- It has already been pointed out how difficult it is to distinguish, among the measures adopted, the respective importance of those designed to reduce educational wastage and those aimed at quantitative and qualitative improvements in the instruction provided. The purpose of the foregoing list of current actions in various countries is simply to put forward a range of possible solutions and a number of hypotheses on which to base future research.

b) In countries with high enrolment

The very nature of educational wastage in these countries gives rise to two types of measure. The first sets out to provide pupils with as much schooling as possible and to keep them in the education system beyond compulsory schooling. Such measures therefore place the emphasis on efforts to modify and diversify education and training courses at each level of instruction. Even though it is still claimed that the ultimate goal of the "school" is to provide young people with the best possible opportunity for personal development and self-fulfilment and that entry into wroking life is merely one aspect of their relationship with society, the fact is that this aspect is now regarded as essential, since it represents the normal process whereby young people accede to personal responsibilities and develop the capacity to assume them in full independence.

The second type of measure is focused on young persons with a poor school record marked, for example, by many repetitions. For them, the measures include special classes, structures to ensure early detection and guidance, new attitudes to teaching, and so forth. Many of these children come from groups at a social and economic disadvantage. This explains why policies aimed at reducing educational wastage often incorporate direct material and financial assistance.

The first category of measures, whose purpose is to avoid drop-out, includes the prolongation of compulsory schooling. This approach is fairly typical of all countries with high enrolment, though the education systems vary as to the particular moment chosen for guidance and specialization, which can take place either before or after the end of compulsory schooling.

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The next concern is to offer, immediately after compulsory schooling, the courses of training most likely to ensure smooth integration into working life. All countries underlined the complexity of the problem, it being very difficult to obtain a precise idea of future employment opportunities in the labour market. In this connection, a recent OECD study (1) remarks that "the school is now required to play a supporting role in the preparation for active life, social integration and subsequent educational development, rather than attempting to find a balance and precise adjustments between education and employment". All states are in fact looking for new educational models for recurrent education in the second stage of the second level.

The measures in the second category, which seek to ensure better schooling at the individual level, include :

- The extremely rapid development of pre-school education, which amounts to lengthening the period spent at school; one of its stated functions is to ensure smooth progress through the school without setbacks in the form of repetition and thus avoid the retardation which follows the pupil from level to level and restricts his subsequent choice of career (France gave figures of 100% enrolment at 5 years old, 98% at the age of 4, 86% at 3 and 36% at 2 in 1977).

- Maximum flexibility during compulsory schooling. Some countries are reorganizing course content in the first year of primary education so as to reduce the danger of creating adjustment problems for children with very different learning paces; the basic skills formerly concentrated into this year are now spread over the first two years of study. A large number of measures to counter the inflexibility of education systems are focused on the second level; they make it easier to transfer from one stream to another, and their purpose is to obtain what Austria called "a high degree of permeability within the system of education". These modifications are being accompanied by the growing development of guidance structures and efforts to improve the way they work.

- A more individualized instruction for all pupils who are backward or showing signs of some kind of cultural handicap. At the primary level this might mean setting up classes for the application of new approaches to teaching. In Belgium, for example, the "adaptation classes", like New Zealand's "reading clinics" and "alternative schools", have been established to help pupils fill in their gaps and then return to normal schooling.

In the United States, a special programme is dealing with drop-out prevention. A large number of experiments in each State are concentrating on the early detection of pupils likely to experience learning problems, particularly the children of ethnic minority families. According to a report on Drop-out Prevention (2), it is estimated that drop-out among the target population fell by 45.3% during the first three years of the scheme. This type of evaluation is all too rare.

At the second level, measures to reduce wastage include the organization of "support teaching". Both France and Belgium are working along these lines. In Belgium, the 1974/1975 Reform of Secondary Education created "experimental classes" to cater for "problem children and socio-cultural handicaps that hinder normal progress at school". Their purpose is to enable young persons to return to the "seconde professionnelle" (5th year vocational) or "première rénovée" (renovated 6th year) classes covering the first and second years of upper secondary education and thus avoid a dead-end situation. This reform met such a need that

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(1) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Beyond Compulsory Schooling, op. cit. p.5.

(2) Drop-out Prevention; A special report by the National Advisory Council on Supplementary Centres and Services, Washington D.C., George Washington University, National Advisory Council on Supplementary Centres and Services, April 1975.

at the start of the following year the experiment was extended to pupils obtaining poor results in the higher classes (i.e. "seconde professionnelle" and "première rénovée") so that pupils in the 4th year vocational course (troisième professionnelle"), "whose demands for vocational qualification are largely determined by the needs of the regional labour market" (1), may reach a higher level and thus improve their chances of quickly finding a job.

Such measures provide an answer to the criticisms of employers, who say that compulsory schooling produces young people with insufficient general education and no sign of vocational preparation or constructive attitudes (2). They should perhaps also be regarded as a means of responding to the growing number of pupils who reject the school as an institution, finding it too out of touch with their particular problems.

- Attempts to transform the school through greater parental participation in its running. Active co-operation between parents and teachers might prove the solution to setbacks caused by a certain breakdown in communication between the school and home environments or by the conflict of generations. Austria mentioned efforts in this direction and it is a stated objective of Australia's programme of development, which encourages parents to organize talks, seminars and workshops as well as frequent meetings with teachers.

Similarly, in many countries, educational centres run by teachers are trying to foster more interaction between the school and its social environment and paying serious attention to adult initiatives in the development of curricula for schools.

- Lastly, there is a general tendency for countries to extend free education, including the cost of transportation, meals (school canteens) and textbooks, to a growing number of pupils regardless of their socio-economic origin (France, Austria, Australia). In addition, special measures, usually in the form of scholarships, provide for children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.

Besides these "conventional" approaches, more and more attempts are being made - at the post-compulsory level, of course - to supply an ever-increasing amount of information on all forms of out-of-school education and training or on all opportunities provided by the various arrangements related to lifelong education. Examples include the role of the O.N.I.S.E.P. (3) in France, sandwich courses in the Netherlands, evening courses in Malta and the wide variety of "non-formal" courses in Austria and New Zealand.

II - MEASURES SPECIALLY AIMED AT REDUCING FEMALE WASTAGE IN EDUCATION.

The first point is that the special measures to improve schooling for girls can hardly be said to be numerous - but is this really a surprise? We have seen to what extent the multifarious causes of female wastage are approached by intuition rather than precise research and have noted the strong tendency in the most disadvantaged countries to say that there is nothing to be done, that, all other things being equal, boys will always get on better than girls. In some industrialized countries this opinion is widespread too, but the facts are there to disprove certain allegations and a lot of research is now overturning ingrained prejudices.

However, a certain number of surprising ideas are coming to light in countries where these problems are particularly acute. Besides approaches that might be regarded as classic, such as more schools for girls, the building of boarding facilities and girls' hostels, the development of teacher training for girls, facilities for the transport and accommodation of women primary teachers and a broader range of focational courses, thought-provoking proposals have been made in almost all the countries of Asia

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(1) F. FLORQUIN, "Les Classes d'accueil expérimentales", Revue de la Direction Générale de l'Organisation des Etudes, Brussels, 1977, No.1.

(2) According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Entry of Young People into Working Life; General Report, Paris, May 1977.

(3) Office National d'Information sur les Enseignements et les Professions.

The search for equity may take the form of inverse discrimination. Free schooling? Yes, but for girls only. Scholarships? Yes, but for girls only. Compulsory schooling? Yes, but once again only for girls. A new line of thought, evidence of a fresh and extremely important awareness, is emerging. It is possible that habits of thought and family decisions cannot be changed without "shock" decisions of this kind. People are at last beginnning to realize that perhaps they ought to begin by asserting their own personalities before attempting to catch up, an impossible task when left to the simple pressure of events.

Other measures should also be mentioned. They are less revolutionary of course, yet bear witness to the desire to take present-day lifestyles into consideration : baby-minding facilities are needed so that very young mothers may return to their studies; they must be re-admitted after having had to leave too soon; all non-formal possibilities must be made available to them; married women must be allowed to study in lycées, etc.

Official bodies - sometimes of ministerial level - are now responsible for the future status of women. Two legal texts mentioned in the survey are worthy of note. The terms of reference of a Commission on the Status of Women, set up in Ivory Coast in December 1976, included the examination of difficulties encountered by girls in the field of education and training. In Peru, Article 11 of the General Law on Education was expressly concerned with improving the status of women.

Thus a good many countries - even countries with a very long history of segregation - are bringing out avant-garde measures, but it is hard to judge whether they are destined for oblivion or whether, on the contrary, they foretell profound change. We must undoubtedly be more familiar with specific situations and treat broad proposals with some reserve but also develop research methods so as to avoid hindering this initial clarification.

Countries already offering equal conditions of schooling for boys and girls and with many or nearly all children provided with education are necessarily concentrating on measures that will transform the respective roles of the two sexes in society. Ministries, committees and many different associations are working in a wide variety of fields to ensure that girls and boys are introduced to life and educated in the same way, with the same standards and the same rights. Many respondents stressed the importance of current research on the revision of curricula, the production of new textbooks, and on drawing the attention of teachers to their subconscious tendency to treat boys and girls differently.

They want women to be properly informed about their actual situation in present-day society and of the means at their disposal to enable them and their daughters to benefit from the right to equality in education.

In this connection, it is interesting to note some thoughts on the changing Arab world (1) that refer to the growing receptivity to education in general and among girls in particular. The main factors in this evolution are "the re-evaluation of religious concepts, the liberalization of the condition of women, increased awareness of the economic role of girls' education, raising of the marriage age, the progressive disappearance of the patriarchal family order, and the fact that young girls believe they should be educated in order to marry educated men - who were formerly obliged to marry foreigners...

"Until recently, many parents regarded education with a good deal of suspicion and scepticism, often seeing in it a break with the traditions of society and a threat to moral and religious values ... This conception has greatly changed during the last two decades, although there are some areas in which vestiges of it remain ...

"One of the basic factors favouring the development of education in Arab countries is the feeling that it is a major means of social advancement ... Mention must be made of the progressive reduction of the role of pressure groups, such as religious figures and influential village or town notables ... The expansion of Arab societies, their contact with modern civilization, the spread of culture itself, the emergence of individualism and the growth of large cities have gradually led to the disappearance of the social coercion exerted by certain social groups, whereby individual action was confined to a predetermined framework it was impossible to leave. The result has been a greater number of young people, and particularly girls, enrolled in the various branches of education".

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(1) Abdullah Abdel Dayem, "The changing Arab World" in: Education on the Move, Paris, Unesco Press, 1975, pp. 25-27.

III - THE MEASURES ADOPTED : SCOPE AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

We have already referred to the joint ILO-Unesco study on educational wastage published in 1971, which drew up a much more detailed list of problems than we have been able to do on the basis of replies to a fairly limited survey. But all their "problems and remedies", which take both education system and outside factors into consideration, reflect the same broad categories as may be found in the present study.

For the full list of measures designed to reduce wastage in general, the reader should consult the working document of the 1970 Conference included in the reference work which reviews nearly all the possible solutions for the various types of situation, though it tends, perhaps, to put more stress on new approaches to teaching than on problems of structure. Nor does it make any allusion to the particular situation of girls.

As regards our own survey, a few points seem important:

- Many measures entail the allocation of considerable additional resources, in some cases in inviverse proportion to a country's possibilities. All respondents spoke of financial difficulties and the shortage of buildings; many countries complained that they did not have "enough financial resources to satisfy demand" for the construction of new schools and/or the purchase of teaching materials, the training of an increasing number of teachers, the creation of new posts such as guidance officers, and so forth. They are obliged to make choices in regard to resource allocation and then to defend these choices.

- Yet the link between the remedies that are proposed and implemented and the reduction of wastage is not self-evident. One only concrete example came up in the survey - an improved individual performance among children from disadvantaged backgrounds in the United States - but this is only one aspect of wastage. Peru and Sudan questioned the effectiveness of automatic promotion.

There is a flagrant lack of evaluation of the measures adopted. Admittedly, it is not easy to evaluate results in a field that depends so much on the "time" variable but there can be no progress without it.

- We have already stressed the underlying ambiguity of the term "educational wastage" and the ensuing confusion due to whether one chooses to examine the evolution of a system or, alternatively, the behavious of some of the people involved in it. The causes of wastage cannot be identified with reasonable clarity unless attention is concentrated on one of these interpretations and hence on its visible effects. All the evidence suggests that research on the causes of wastage with a view to discovering possible solutions would be made easier if, in the first place, a distinction were drawn between repetition and drop-out during compulsory education - particularly at the first level - and drop-out either at the end of compulsory schooling or during the chosen course of post-compulsory education and, secondly, if the operation of the system and pupil behaviour were no longer lumped together. This would make it possible to arrange all the replies to the questionnaire as well as remarks based on other research in accordance with the most plausible causal relationships.

The authors of the document mentioned above note that pedagogical research has scarcely concerned itself with the problem of wastage. This is because the research has lacked a clear target; the implicit assumption that it is a matter of teaching methods is hardly self-evident.

- It is impossible to gauge the amount of repetition and drop-out by employing various possible enrolment ratios that measure the annual growth in pupil numbers. We must be clear about this: one country might have 60% of its 6 to 11 year population at school, of whom only 25% are girls, and a very low probability - say around 30% - that its pupils will complete primary education, whereas another country with the same enrolment ratio may have 50% female pupils and 80% of all pupils completing their schooling.

In certain countries enrolments have risen sharply whereas in others, for reasons yet to be discovered, they have remained despairingly stable - yet planners know what price they have had to pay for their sometimes successful efforts to organize a coherent network of schools. But teachers and the general public are not well-informed and rarely see the relation between cause and effect.

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- Even though planning techniques, particularly in regard to the zoning of schools, have enabled certain countries to make considerable progress, this study has repeatedly criticized the inadequacy of statistical information - lack of data, lack of relevant processing or lack of dissemination - as to how girls accede to education and then pursue their schooling. One suggested measure for immediate action is the preparation of a "school zoning map for girls" that could be superimposed on that for boys; this would pinpoint critical areas for in-depth analysis and make it possible to compare pupil concentrations by sex and the identified populations by criteria related to the education system as well as to the cultural and socio-economic environment.

The educational situation of girls cannot be brought out by a process of deduction. It is not like a photographic negative kept in the bottom of a drawer until election time or the visit of foreign dignitaries; it is a social fact that should be made known, especially when it is unpalatable, since ignorance of the facts greatly handicaps the search for effective solutions. Too many assertions are founded on impressions.

A school zoning map for girls could serve as the basis for inexpensive surveys. It remains to develop an approrpriate methodology, which could be outlined at the international level and adjusted to fit each national context.

- All the measures listed produce effects which are often makeshift though sometimes long-term, but these effects are weighed up only from an empirical point of view. The assumption that girls suffer more from inequality in gaining admission to school than in their school careers needs to be verified in view of the differences betwen the social groups to which girls and boys in an unevenly balanced situation belong.

- Will countries be forced to choose between extending the customary, essentially masculine type of schooling to neglected regions, and raising the proportion of girls in existing schools? How can the incentives or tests employed by a decision-making body be reconciled with the behaviour patterns of social groups?

- The role of the information media is obscure. Their messages appear to be highly sensitive to generally accepted stereotypes but, here again, no scientific observations on countries with persistent discrimination are available. And yet it is easy to imagine the potential role of information in helping families, teachers and the pupils themselves to understand their particular situation, to grasp the changes under way and to overcome hesitations.

- Could the example of the socialist countries, which have taken less time than the others to achieve equal participation in education of girls and boys, help explain the comparative school careers and performance of girls and boys?

- The history of the education systems in industrialized countries shows that compulsory schooling, free tuition and anoymous examinations have unquestionably helped to reduce discrimination, yet have not managed to prevent girls from losing ground in their utilization of schools, and that they have had to wait until the second half of the twentieth century to catch up with boys. We must therefore seek out the reasons for this development elsewhere.

- It is generally agreed that inequality of educational opportunity has been reduced in Europe in recent decades, but it is very difficult to gauge the relative importnace of population growth rates, the widespread desire for knowledge and the needs of the labour market within a general situation marked by the upheavals of two world wars.

- This is why simply to adopt the measures being employed by countries in which educational wastage is more or less the same for girls as for boys will not of itself produce the same results in less favoured regions. It cannot be denied that the scope of the measures usually envisaged might well be limited by the mere fact of a growing birthrate, which can cause appropriations to be earmarked for upholding the current enrolment ratios for boys. A study is needed on the comparison of schooling with unequal access.

To achieve a balanced participation in education of boys and girls and equality during the educational process, it thus appears realistic to uphold the principle of a discrimination in favour of girls and to begin considering how this could be implemented.

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- At the world level, there is growing recognition that the contents of education should be revised. Would it not be desirable to make sure that notions traditionally associated with the world of men or the world of women but needing to be taught to both girls and boys are systematically included in curricula at all levels of instruction? Each sex has overlapping interests within which knowledge converging on a single theme may be discerned. We can agree, for example, that one of these themes is the child, and that everything to do with his procreation, birth, nutrition, health, games and growing awareness of the outside world is of genuine interest to the young. But they could be aroused by other themes too, such as the struggle against everything that burdens the life of human communities in towns or in the country, in rich or poor areas. In this way the school could become a focal point where the foundations for social change in general and for new male and female roles in particular could be laid.

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How should we conclude when so many questions remain? Perhaps by condemning the astonishing silence that greets the person who wants to tackle, at the world level, the question of the girl's place in school. Or by expressing the hope that better data and statistical analyses will enable us to obtain more insight into the comparative situations of the two sexes without our being obliged to deduct one from the general total to find the other. Or by fighting to ensure that research in this field occasions neither scorn nor polemical argument but helps to make all people more aware of the problems encountered by women.